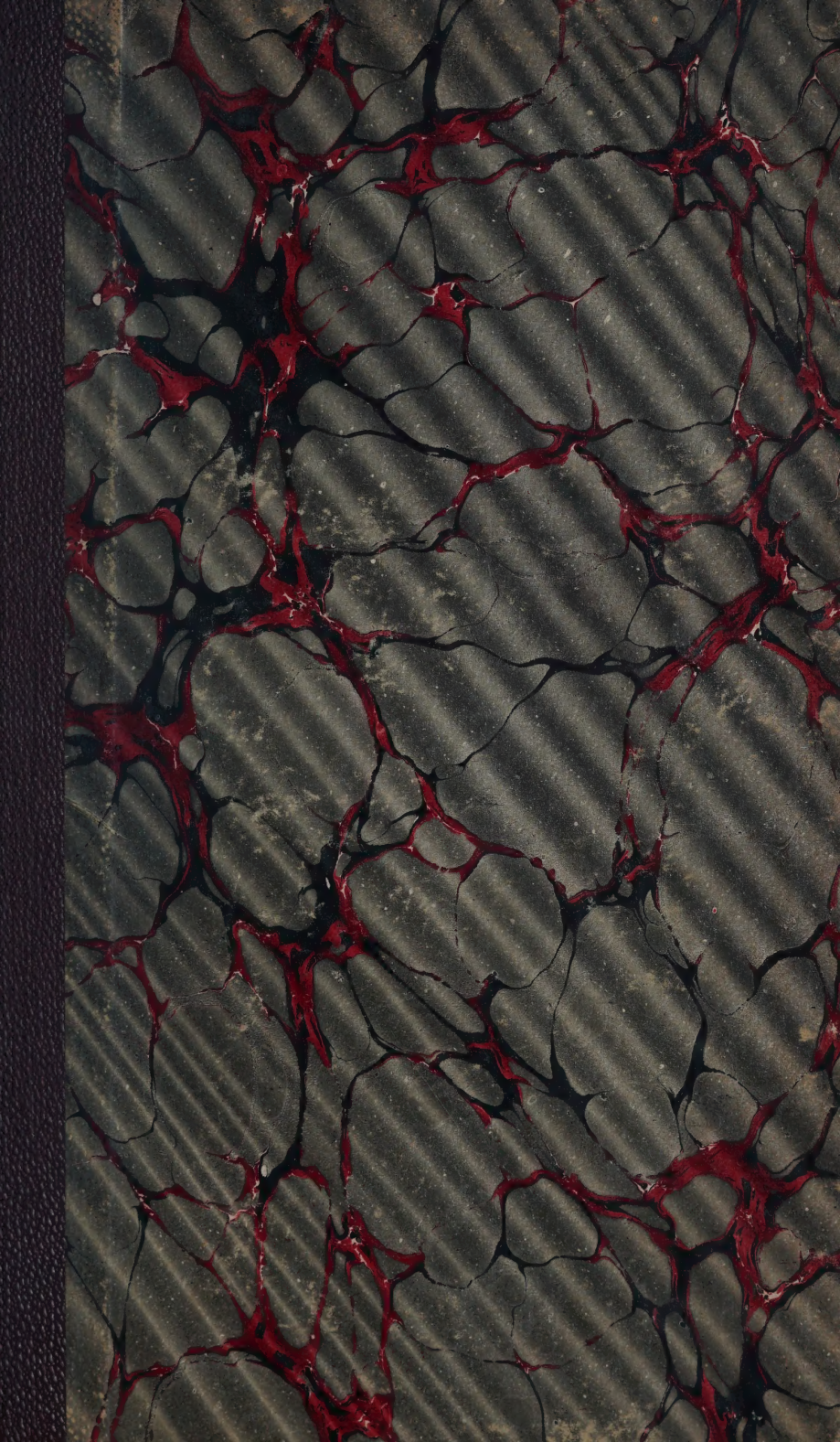
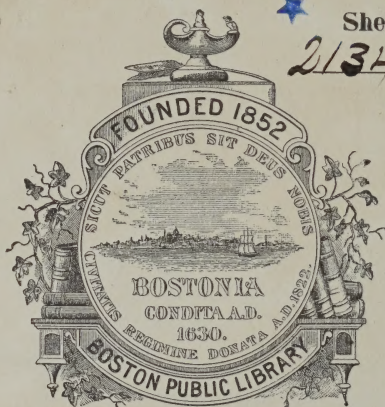






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City Document—No. 31.

CITY OF BOSTON.



MAJORITY AND MINORITY REPORTS

ON THE SUBJECT OF A

NEW BUILDING FOR THE CITY GOVERNMENT

AND

PUBLIC LIBRARY

ON THE SAME SITE.

In Common Council, April 28, 1853.

Read, laid on the table and ordered to be printed;
with the Report of the Majority.

Attest:

W. P. GREGG, *Clerk C. C.*

In Common Council, March 24th, 1853.

Ordered, That the Committee on Public Library, in conjunction with the Committee on Public Buildings, consider the practicability and expediency of providing for the Public Library and further accommodations for the City Government, by erections on the City's land, on School Street, by additions to the present City Hall or by an entirely new erection for the two objects upon the site of the present City Hall and lands appurtenant.

Sent up for concurrence.

HENRY J. GARDNER, *President.*

In the Board of Mayor and Aldermen,

March 28, 1853.

Passed in concurrence.

BENJAMIN SEAVER, *Mayor.*

Boston, April 14th, 1853.

The Joint Committees on Public Library and Public Buildings, to whom was referred the order of March 24th, relative to the providing for a place for the Public Library, by altering the present City Hall, or by erecting a new building upon its site, having carefully considered the subject, beg leave to

REPORT:

That, after seeing the elegant and commodious plans prepared by a sub-committee, they have by a vote of 7 to 4 declared, "that it is impracticable and inexpedient to provide for the Public Library, either by erecting additions to the present City Hall, or by erecting upon its site and the lands appurtenant, a new structure, which shall provide accommodations for the City Government and for the City Library in one building."

For the Committee,

GEO. W. WARREN.

April 26th, 1853.

The undersigned, members of the Joint Committee on Public Library and Public Buildings, who were directed to consider the practicability and expediency of providing for the Public Library, and further accommodations for the City Government, by erections upon the site of the present City Hall,—and who differ with some of their associates, in the opinion expressed in their report submitted to the Council on the 14th inst., beg leave to

REPORT:

That a sub-committee was appointed by the Committee to have plans made for the purpose of ascertaining the capabilities of the site proposed. This was attended to, and a plan exhibited to the Committee and a general explanation of it given them, which plan and explanation are herewith submitted to the City Council as a part of this report.

By them we ascertain that ample room and accommodations can be obtained on the City Hall land for a library, and for all the city offices in one building, and yet separate and distinct from each other.

And we are of the opinion that no estate has yet been proposed whereon to erect a library, that has so many advantages, so few objections, or one that would give such general satisfaction as the one in question.

BENJAMIN JAMES,
ISAAC CARY,
J. D. ROBERTS,
C. C. CONLEY,
F. B. WINTER,
JOHN H. THORNDIKE.

General explanation of the Plan made under the direction of a Sub-Committee of the Joint Committees on Public Library and Public Buildings for a building on the City Hall land, to answer the purpose of a Public Library and Municipal Offices.

The building is in the form of a quadrangle ;—the court in the centre is 50x80 feet. It has three principal stories. The first is 25 feet, which is divided into two stories ; the first part, or sub-story, being 12 feet, and the “Entrésole,” or upper part, being 10 feet in height. On this first floor in corner next the stone chapel, are set off two rooms for the Library ; one of them to be a reading room having a private entrance from the side for females ; the other for males, to be entered through the principal entrances, which entrances are in the centre of the building, the one on School Street and the other on Court Square, through a vestibule 30 feet square ;—between these two rooms which will hold 20,000 volumes, it is proposed to have an office for an attendant, who will have charge of the rooms on first story ; from this office leading to the Library, in the third story, to be a dumb waiter, with speaking tubes and bell, by means of which books required in the reading rooms and those for circulation can be here delivered.

The Municipal Offices obtained on this floor are for

	Feet.
City Treasurer, ...	40x30
Auditor, ...	30x19

	Feet.
Water Registrar, ea. . . .	30x19 2 rooms.
Police and Watch, ...	40x30 and 30x19
City Registrar, ...	30x19
City Physician, ...	30x19
Directors of House of Correction,	30x19
Directors of House of Industry,	30x19
Overseers of the Poor, . . .	30x19 and 20x20

In the "Entrèsole."

Private Room for Librarian, .	30x20
City Solicitor, ...	30x20
Assessors—2 rooms, ea. . .	23.6x18
Supt. Public Buildings, . .	23.6x18
“ Lands, ...	23.6x18
“ Sewers, ...	23.6x18
“ Streets, ...	23.6x18
“ Lamps, ...	23.6x18
Engin'rs of the Fire Depart'nt,	23.6x18
City Engineer and Assistants, 2	
rooms, ...	30x20 and 23.6x18
Supt. Public Schools, . . .	23.6x18
Office for Primary School Board,	23.6x18

On the Second Story.

Chamber for Mayor and Alder-	
men, ...	58x30
And adjoining same, office for	
Mayor, ...	30x19
Office for City Clerk, . . .	30x28
Committee Room, ...	20x19
Room for Messenger, . . .	10x19
One Committee Room, . . .	30x19
Chamber for Common Council, .	58x30

	Feet.
Ante Room, ...	30x19
Office for Clerk of Common Council, ...	30x19
Water Commissioners, 2 rooms,	30x30 and 38x18
Three spare rooms, not appro- priated, ...	1—48x30 1—30x33 1—20x18

In the third story, the principal rooms for the Library, to wit:

One room on the west side, extending from the front to rear, say 160 feet by 38 in the clear, which can be lighted both by windows on the sides and by sky lights, and capable of holding 150,000 volumes at least. When more room is required, that on the east side, of the same size as the one on the west, can be appropriated, and should more room then be needed, that over the Court Square vestibule and stair way, measuring 50x40 can be added; the latter would hold full 50,000 volumes. It has been estimated that these rooms, packed as many libraries are, would contain over 500,000 volumes.

It is desirable that, hereafter, whenever any public building is to be erected by the City, of as much importance as a Library or City Hall, that the site should be all that is wanted, rather than what we can possibly make answer the purpose, and that the building should be one in regard to style, size and arrangements, that will be consistent with the character and importance of our City.

Only a week's time was given the sub-committee to furnish the plan, and consequently it would need, and is susceptible of many improvements. To avoid the

risk of committing such gross errors in proportions, embellishments, &c., as have been too common with us in public buildings, the Façade of the Farnése Palace at Rome, has been studied and in part copied ;—it however should not be understood that because the fair proportions of this building have been availed of, that it is recommended to copy the entire building, which was designed and executed by the most eminent architects the world ever knew. Critics of high reputation speak of it in the most exalted terms. One says, “ the beauty of the proportions, forms and construction, rivals anything of the kind ever executed ;” another says, “ for regularity of plan, the imposing masses of its façade and the richness and boldness of its details, it is one of the principal ornaments of modern Rome.” Another says, “ The architecture of the Farnése Palace is the most perfect adaptation of ancient arrangement, to modern habits, that has ever been designed.” All who have written about it and all who have seen it, speak in the same strain.

But it is not now so much the style of the building that is to be considered, as whether suitable accommodations can be furnished on the land proposed ;* that they can, there can hardly be a doubt, but as to the expediency of erecting at the present time such a building as is here proposed, there may be a difference of opinion.

JOHN H. THORNDIKE.

April, 1853.

* No site yet proposed has the advantage of such fine open spaces about it as this ;—there will be on the South side, School Street ; the building will be so set back as to give a clear space of 50 feet ;—on the West, the Cemetery, which will admit of a view from Tremont Street ; on the North, a view will be had from Court Street, on both sides of the Court House, and on the East will be a passage way of 20 feet.

